



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/715,561	11/19/2003	Kazuhiro Ukida	UKID3001/EM	5056

23364 7590 12/17/2004

BACON & THOMAS, PLLC
625 SLATERS LANE
FOURTH FLOOR
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

EXAMINER

GREEN, BRIAN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3611

DATE MAILED: 12/17/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/715,561

Applicant(s)

UKIDA ET AL.

Examiner

Brian K. Green

Art Unit

3611

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because on line 9 the word "invention" is used which is improper. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Claim Objections

Claims 1-6 are objected to because of the following informalities: In claims 1 and 5, line 3, "the appliance" should be "the equipment utilizing water" since there is no antecedent basis for "the appliance". In claims 2-4 and 6, line 1, "the equipment" should be "the equipment utilizing water". In claim 6, line 2, "the appliance" should be "the equipment utilizing water" to be consistent with claim 5, line 1. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1,3,5, and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the applicant's admitted prior art shown in figure 7 and defined on pages 1 and 2 of the specification in view of Ogden (U.S. Patent No. 4,478,666).

The applicant's admitted prior art shown in figure 7 and defined on pages 1 and 2 of the specification disclose an equipment utilizing water comprising an operation section (60), a member (55), and a transparent film (59) on the member (55). The applicant's admitted prior art shown in figure 7 and defined on pages 1 and 2 of the specification fails to disclose making the

Art Unit: 3611

member (55) from a transparent material and placing a decoration on a surface of the member (55) opposite to the transparent film. Ogden shows in figure 1 a control panel that includes a transparent member (16) which include a transparent cover (18) on a front surface and a decoration (50) on an opposite surface (65) of the transparent member (16). In view of the teachings of Ogden it would have been obvious to one in the art to modify the applicant's admitted prior art shown in figure 7 and defined on pages 1 and 2 of the specification by making the member (55) transparent and attaching a decoration to a surface of the member (55) opposite to the transparent film since this would the decoration/indicia to be protected from damage in a better manner and would help to create a more aesthetically pleasing display panel on the equipment utilizing water. In regard to claim 3, the method used to form the decoration is not given weight in an article claim. Further, Ogden discloses in column 8, lines 35-40 the idea of silk screening the decoration/indicia onto the member (16). In regard to claim 6, the applicant's admitted prior art shown in figure 7 and defined on pages 1 and 2 of the specification discloses the use of an adhesive between the member (55) and the rest of the housing. The adhesive is considered to be the connection structure and would be located on the colored member/decoration/indicia.

Claims 2 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the applicant's admitted prior art shown in figure 7 and defined on pages 1 and 2 of the specification in view of Ogden (U.S. Patent No. 4,478,666) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Miwa (U.S. Patent No. 4,625,097).

Art Unit: 3611

The applicant's admitted prior art shown in figure 7 and defined on pages 1 and 2 of the specification in view of Ogden disclose the applicant's basic inventive concept except for attaching a decoration to a portion of the transparent film. Miwa shows in figures 1-4 an equipment utilizing water including an upper transparent member (51) including a decoration/indicia (52,53) thereon. In view of the teachings of Miwa it would have been obvious to one in the art to modify the applicant's admitted prior art shown in figure 7 and defined on pages 1 and 2 of the specification by attaching a decoration/indicia to the transparent film since this would allow additional information to be displayed on the display panel as well as to allow the decoration/indicia to be displayed in a more eye-catching and aesthetically pleasing manner. In regard to claim 4, the method used to form the decoration is not given weight in an article claim. Further, printing indicia/decoration is shown to be conventional by Ogden in column 8, lines 35-40, i.e. silk screening the decoration/indicia.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Girard, Lai et al., Alexander, and Martter et al. teach the use of control/display panels that include indicia/decorations thereon.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brian K. Green whose telephone number is (703) 308-1011. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7am-3:30pm.

Art Unit: 3611

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lesley Morris can be reached on (703) 308-0629. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


BRIAN K. GREEN
PRIMARY EXAMINER

Bkg
Dec. 13, 2004